

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

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received

date entered

1. Name

057-1370-0016

historic Lora Locke Hotel

and/or common Lora Locke Hotel

2. Location

street & number Central & Gunsmoke

N/A not for publication

city, town Dodge City

N/A vicinity of

state Kansas

code 20

county Ford

code 057

3. Classification

Category

☐ district
☒ building(s)
☐ structure
☐ site
☐ object

Ownership

☐ public
☒ private
☐ both

Public Acquisition

☐ in process
☐ being considered

N/A

Status

☒ occupied
☐ unoccupied
☐ work in progress

Accessible

☐ yes: restricted
☒ yes: unrestricted
☐ no

Present Use

☐ agriculture
☒ commercial
☐ educational
☐ entertainment
☐ government
☐ industrial
☐ military☐ museum
☐ park
☐ private residence
☐ religious
☐ scientific
☐ transportation
☒ other: Hotel

4. Owner of Property

name George Voss

Michael Burkhart

street & number 2020 Hart

1901 N. 4th Ave.

city, town Dodge City

N/A vicinity of

state Kansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Ford County Courthouse

city, town Dodge City

state KS 67801

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title (none)

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date N/A

☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A

state N/A

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered
(slightly)

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Lora Locke Hotel is a five-story building of reinforced concrete construction faced with red brick and trimmed in Indiana limestone. It is located on the northwest corner of Central and Gunsmoke (formerly Walnut) Streets in the central business district of Dodge City. It has a rectangular plan on the first two floors, with a frontage of 125 feet on Gunsmoke Street to the south and 115 feet on Central to the east. The upper three stories have a U-shaped plan arranged around a rectangular light well located in the middle of the south front of the building, opening toward Gunsmoke Street. The roof is flat. A one-story wing containing two shops projects from the north along Central Street.

The exterior walls of the first floor have the form of brick piers with simplified Tuscan capitals. The space between the "piers" is taken up by plate glass shop windows, which were replaced in 1980.

The exterior walls of the second through fifth stories are faced with brick. Those on the street facades contain paired, double-hung, six-over-six windows. The walls of the second story are adorned with stone rosette-centered octagonal medallions between each pair of windows. The third and fourth floors are much more ornate than the rest of the building, with paired Tuscan pilasters of stone carrying a full entablature crowned with a parapet and false balustrades. Between the pilasters, the paired windows are surmounted by brick arches filled with brick laid in a diagonal basketweave pattern. Originally the corners of the parapet were decorated with clustered urns, but these have been removed.

Entrances on the south and east fronts open into corridors leading to a central lobby which is two stories in height. The second floor overlooks it in the form of a mezzanine. The lobby area is now used, in part, for dining because the original dining room has been converted to office use.

The interior of the building has exceptionally high integrity for a hotel of this period. The lobby area is virtually unchanged from its original appearance. The guest rooms have been enlarged by the removal of some partition walls, and the corridor ceilings in the upper stories have been lowered to allow for air-conditioner ductwork, but otherwise the appearance of the upper floors is little changed. Of particular interest is the old laundry room in the basement. Unused for many years, this facility has retained all of its original equipment intact.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1927-28

Builder/Architect

Ellis & Charles of Wichita, KS, Architects
Eastergard & Bullard of McCook, NE, Contractors

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Lora Locke Hotel is architecturally significant as one of the most intact hotels in Kansas which remain from the 1920s. It is an excellent example of the urban hotels of that period, and one of the very few in the state to retain such a high degree of integrity.

HISTORY

In early 1927 George Howell, a prominent realtor and former mayor of Dodge City, and Otto Theis, a prosperous rancher, formed the Citizens Hotel Company for the purpose of building a grand hotel in Dodge City. The architectural firm of Ellis and Charles of Wichita provided the plans for the building, which was built by Eastergard and Bullard of McCook, NE. Excavation began in May, 1927, and the new hotel opened for business in March, 1928. It was given the name "Lora Locke," combining Howell's wife's first name and Theis' wife's maiden name.

The first decades of the 20th century were prosperous for the Dodge City area because of the expansion of agriculture. Mechanization, crop rotation, and new ways of farming caused southwest Kansas to boom economically. In the years of WWI, agriculture of the Plains continued to expand because of the demand for food from the warring nations of Europe. Although a recession in the early 1920s caused farm prices to drop, an improvement in prices occurred in 1925 that continued until the nation entered the depression years around 1930. During these years (1925-1930), a building boom contributed to the expansion and business growth of Dodge City. Many of Dodge City's remaining architecturally significant buildings were built between 1925 and 1930. These include a grade school, a high school, city hall, several churches, a bank, an apartment building, a department store and movie theater building, and several prominent private residences. Most of these structures used classically inspired architectural forms. (The department store/theater building was constructed by George Howell next to the Lora Locke Hotel and for many years the hotel provided its heat and hot water.) The Lora Locke Hotel was one of the largest buildings constructed during this period.

The hotel provided accommodation for some 35,000 guests during its first year. It continued operating successfully during the lean years of the Depression. After the untimely deaths of George Howell in 1930 and Otto Theis in 1934, their widows continued to operate the hotel. In 1944, the Theis family bought out Mrs. Howell's interest and continued the operation until the hotel's closing February 7, 1978, just one month short of its 50th anniversary. The hotel reopened March, 1984, under new ownership.

Over the years the hotel has contributed to the commercial development of Dodge City by providing lodging for thousands of visitors: businessmen, tourists, and even such celebrities as Charles Lindbergh, Errol Flynn, and Olivia de Havilland. Its meeting rooms have provided space for numerous conventions, business conferences, and social events. Rehabilitated and reopened, it continues to serve the city today.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .37 acres (124' x 130')

Quadrangle name Dodge City, KS

Quadrangle scale 1: 24,000

UTM References

A

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Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard J. Cawthon

organization Kansas State Historical Society

date November 13, 1984

street & number 120 West 10th

telephone (913) 296-3251

city or town Topeka

state Kansas 66612

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

date November 13, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION & JUSTIFICATION

Lots one (1), two (2), three (3), and four (4) on Walnut Street in the City of Dodge City, Kansas, except a tract described as follows:

Beginning at the Southeast corner of said Lot one (1); thence running north on the East line of said lot, eight (8) feet; thence west at right angles one foot and eight inches (1'8"); thence southwest to a point on the south line of said Lot one, nine feet and six inches (9'6") west of the place of beginning; thence east to the place of beginning.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dodge City Daily Globe: July 23, 1927; February 5, 1927; February 26, 1927; October 11, 1927; October 27, 1927; January 2, 1928; March 15, 1928; June 23, 1929; March 5, 1929; February 4, 1930; March 2, 1931; April 14, 1933; August 17, 1939; May 17, 1934; February 31, 1940; July 10, 1955; February 18, 1978; March 20, 1978; and July 11, 1979.

Original architectural plans, Ellis & Charles, Architects.

Young, Frederic. Dodge City, Up Through the Years in Story and Pictures.
Dodge City: Boot Hill Museum, Inc., 1972.

Wenzel, Timothy. Discovering Dodge City's Landmarks. Spearville, KS:
Spearville News, Inc., 1980.

This nomination was prepared from a draft submitted by Nancy Jo Trauer,
1309 West Brier, Dodge City, Kansas 67801.

Lora Locke Hotel
Dodge City, Ford County, Kansas
UTM Reference: 14/410450/4178730

4180000m N.

7 MI. TO JUNC. U.S. 283 & 56
KINSLEY (VIA U.S. 50 & 56) 36 MI.

37°45' 100°00'

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY RESTON, VIRGINIA—1978

1.1 MI. TO JUNC. U.S. 283 & 56
SUBLETTE (VIA U.S. 56) 52 MI.

3.8 MI. TO FORT DODGE
MULLINVILLE (VIA U.S. 54) 36 MI.

Heavy-duty _____ Light-duty _____
Medium-duty _____ Unimproved dirt _____
U.S. Route _____

